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Governor O'Malley, Senate President Miller and Speaker Busch Sign the Civil Marriage Protection Act of 2012

March 1st, 2012

Maryland becomes eighth state in the nation to legalize same-sex civil marriage

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 1, 2012) – Governor Martin O'Malley today, joined by Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown, Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. and House Speaker Michael E. Busch, signed the Civil Marriage Protection Act of 2012 into law. With the passage of this historic bill, Maryland now becomes the eighth state in the nation to legalize same-sex civil marriage. The Governor released the following statement:

"For a free and diverse people, ... for a people of many faiths, ... for a people committed to the principle of religious freedom, ... the way forward is always to be found through greater respect for the equal rights of all; for the human dignity of all.

"Religious freedom was the very reason for our State's founding. At the heart of religious freedom is the freedom of individual conscience.

"If there is a thread that unites the story of our people, it is the thread of human dignity; the dignity of work; the dignity of family; the dignity of every child's home; the dignity of every individual.

"We are One Maryland, and all of us, at the end of the day, want the same thing for our children: to live in a loving, stable, committed home protected equally under the law."

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Governor Martin O'Malley Announces Increase in Maryland Exports

March 7th, 2012

Will present International Leadership Award to Frank Burch

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 7, 2012) – Governor Martin O'Malley will join more than 350 Maryland business leaders tonight at the 16th Annual World Trade Center Institute's International Business Leadership Awards and announce that Maryland's trade exports climbed seven percent in 2011 to \$10.8 billion – a figure that nearly reaches a State export high of \$11.4 billion in 2008 and shows a recovery to pre-recession levels. Trade with China and India – among the countries targeted as part of the State's trade missions last year – also increased, with exports to China –Maryland's second largest trading partner – rising by \$93 million, and exports to India growing by \$20 million. Non-railway vehicles topped the list of commodities exported from the State last year with more than \$1.7 billion going overseas, and exports of mineral fuel and oil nearly doubled to \$661 million.



"The increase in exports in 2011 to near pre-recession levels is a clear indicator that Maryland is continuing to stimulate our economy by exploring new markets for trade and investment," said Governor O'Malley. "Ultimately, our strength and global competitiveness depend on our willingness to make the modern investments that a modern economy requires to create jobs."

Tonight, Governor O'Malley will present the Governor's International Award to Frank Burch, Global Co-Chairman of DLA Piper who led the evolution of the former Piper & Marbury, a regional firm with 250 lawyers, to DLA Piper, a top-10 global legal practice with 4,200 lawyers

in 30 countries. In addition to the Governor's Award, there are also six awardees of WTCI's International Business Leadership Awards: Mei Xu, creator and president of Chesapeake Bay Candle; James Boomgard, president and CEO of Development Alternatives Inc.; Vinita Gupta, CEO of Lupin Pharmaceuticals; Captain Ahmed Khan, president of NSCSA America; Paul Reed Smith, managing general partner of Paul Reed Smith Guitars; and Titus Beitzel, manager of operations for Beitzel/Pillar Innovations. Two of the award winners – Mei Xu and Paul Reed – were featured in the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development's award-winning Maryland of Opportunity ad campaign, which promotes successful entrepreneurs in the State.

Governor O'Malley will also give an update on the Maryland Export Initiative, which was launched two years ago to compliment President Obama's National Export Initiative with the goal of helping small businesses boost exports and take advantage of global trade opportunities. Last year, Maryland was awarded a \$585,000 grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration to increase the number and amount of Export MD grants, a State program that provides funding to small and mid-sized businesses to help them market their products and services overseas. The State also received a \$100,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to help establish the Western Maryland Export Initiative, which provides funding to help small and mid-sized businesses in the Appalachian region with export assistance. The initiative funds a training class for businesses on exporting and helps cover the costs associated with overseas trade shows, with the goal of boosting the number of Appalachian companies that export.

The O'Malley-Brown Administration has taken significant steps to ramp up the State's international outreach, including opening a number of foreign offices in targeted countries, convening the Governor's International Advisory Council to provide strategic direction and develop a plan to enhance Maryland's global profile, expanding the capacity of the Port of Baltimore with a new 50-foot berth, and opening the State's first International Incubator in 2009 at the University of Maryland, College Park to help foreign-owned companies launch U.S. operations.

Last May, Governor O'Malley led a trade mission to China, South Korea and Vietnam, which netted more than \$85 million in trade and investment deals for Maryland and Maryland companies. The wins included a \$40 million investment by Tasly Group, one of China's leading biopharmaceutical companies, which plans to locate in a new 443,000 square foot production facility and training center at Shady Grove Life Sciences Center in Montgomery County and create dozens of jobs as they prepare for Phase III clinical trials of their traditional Chinese medicine product Compound Danshen Dripping Pills (CDDP) developed to treat and prevent coronary disease. Recently, Premier Rides, a Baltimore-based designer and manufacturer of theme park attractions, announced it was selected to create the world's tallest indoor roller coaster, which will be part of the Great Mall of China near Beijing slated to open in 2013. The deal was a direct result of the mission, which Premier Rides' CEO Jim Seay participated in.

A trade mission to India in November, which was led by Governor O'Malley and included more than 100 participants – marking the largest foreign trade delegation in State history –, resulted in nearly \$60 million in business deals. Two Indian companies announced investments and plans to create jobs in Maryland, including Jubilant Life Sciences, one of India's top pharmaceutical and life sciences companies with a drug manufacturing facility in Salisbury, which plans to invest \$20 million to triple its warehouse space on the Eastern Shore and add new jobs. In addition, eight Maryland businesses inked deals with Indian partners during the mission.

Maryland is well-positioned for growth in the global market, with more than 300 foreign-owned companies from 30 countries currently calling Maryland home. Roughly 105,000 Marylanders, or 3.5 percent of the workforce, are employed by foreign-owned firms, with companies headquartered in the Netherlands, United Kingdom and Germany as the top three foreign employers in Maryland.

Maryland's Office of International Investment and Trade works to stimulate foreign direct investment in the State, offers export assistance for small and mid-sized Maryland companies and coordinates international trade and investment missions and trade show opportunities for Maryland companies. For more information on resources available to business that want to market their products or services globally, visit www.choosemaryland.org. You can also learn more about Maryland's exports by [reading this MDBizMedia blog](#).

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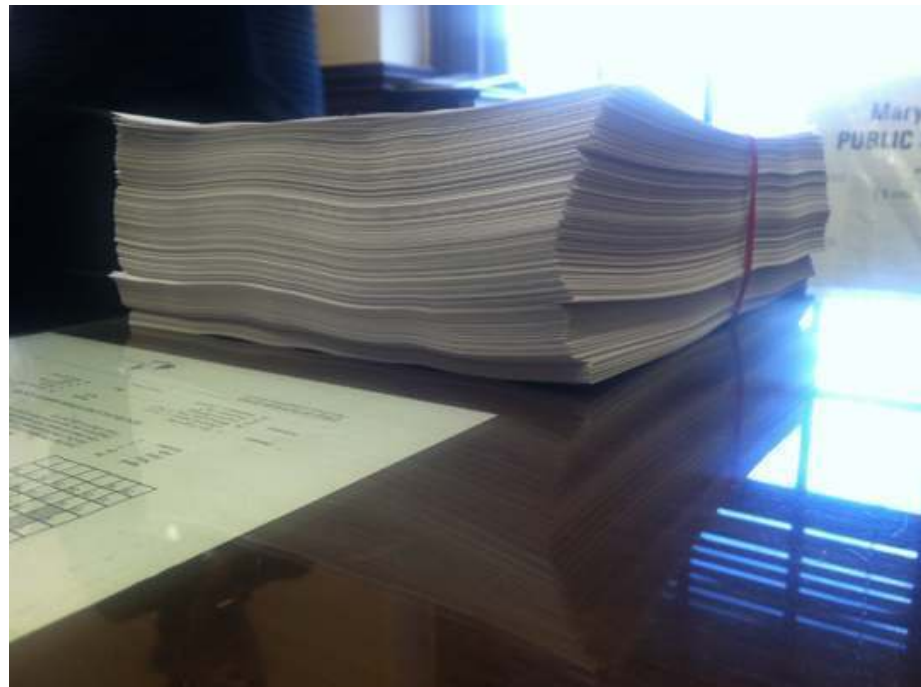
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Governor Martin O'Malley Submits More Than 130 Regulations to be Repealed, Revised or Streamlined

March 9th, 2012

Recommendations to be submitted to the AELR Committee

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 9, 2012) – Governor Martin O'Malley today – Governor Martin O'Malley today submitted 131 state regulations to be repealed, revised or streamlined to the Administrative, Executive and Legislative Review Committee. On October 17, 2011, Governor O'Malley signed an Executive Order requiring all State agencies to conduct a comprehensive review of their regulations in order to identify those that could be modified, streamlined, or repealed in order to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens on Maryland's businesses and promote economic growth and spark faster job creation.



"Making it easier to do business in Maryland – making it easier for businesses to add to their payrolls – remains a top priority," said Governor O'Malley. "Because of the tough choices we have made together over the last six years, unemployment is down to a three year low, we have recovered 45 percent of the jobs lost during the recession and Maryland's businesses are creating jobs again. But better is not good enough. Together, we can create more jobs, as our economy – both nationally and here in Maryland – shows very real signs of improving."

Throughout the review process, the Governor's Office solicited input from partners in the

business community and established a public comment forum on the Maryland Made Easy website to solicit comments from the general public. The Governor's Office received more than 350 comments via the website, all of which were monitored and distributed to the appropriate agencies for review and consideration. Watch the video below encouraging Marylanders to submit comments.

Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown remain committed to creating jobs. In addition to the Executive Order, Governor O'Malley hosted the Maryland Made Easy 2012 Symposium on Job Creation in December to solicit input from business leaders, educators and industry stakeholders on how the state can make it easier for businesses to grow and thrive in Maryland.

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Statement From Governor Martin O'Malley on January Jobs Report

March 13th, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 13, 2012) – Governor Martin O'Malley today released the following statement on the U.S. Department of Labor's release of preliminary employment data for the month of January. The report shows that Maryland's unemployment rate was driven down to 6.5 percent – the lowest unemployment rate in three years and nearly two percentage points below the national rate. Maryland employers added 39,800 jobs since January of last year, the most since January 2005-2006.

"Since January of last year, Maryland continued to create jobs, adding 39,800 jobs and 32,600 jobs in the private sector alone. Our unemployment rate was driven down to 6.5 percent, the lowest we've achieved in three years and nearly 2 percentage points below the national average."

"This steady progress in job creation is a positive sign that Maryland continues to move forward. Maryland has now recovered 69 percent of the jobs lost during the Bush recession (compared to 39 percent for the nation overall). The most important job we create is the next one. There is more work to be done. That's why our focus continues to be creating and saving jobs for Marylanders."

"Progress is a choice, strengthening and growing our middle class is a choice. We must make the modern investments a modern economy requires to create jobs– investments in education, investments in innovation and investments in infrastructure."

"Together, we can expand opportunity and secure a better future for our children."

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Governor Martin O'Malley Testifies on The Maryland Transportation Financing And Infrastructure Investment Act of 2012

March 14th, 2012

Legislation would support 7,500 new jobs in addition to the 52,000 jobs in the Administration's FY2013 proposed capital budget

Includes "braking mechanism" for consumers and stronger protections for the Transportation Trust Fund

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today, joined and supported by Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown, [and business leaders and CEOs from across Maryland](#), testified before a joint hearing of the House Environmental Matters and Ways and Means Committees as well as the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee on the Maryland Transportation Financing and Infrastructure Investment Act of 2012.

[View the Governor's slideshow presentation](#)

In his testimony earlier today, the Governor made the case to rebuild the State's aging infrastructure. [Read the full testimony here.](#)

To see the cost of putting off tomorrow what we can do today for Maryland's infrastructure, visit the [Down the Road webpage.](#)

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
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Statement from Governor Martin O'Malley on the Passage of the U.S. Senate's Transportation Bill

March 14th, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today released the following statement on the U.S. Senate's passage of its version of a federal surface transportation authorization bill:



"I'd like to commend the U.S. Senate for its leadership and appreciation of two urgent needs – jobs and improvements to our nation's roads, bridges, railways and waterways. I'd also like to applaud Senator Mikulski and Senator Cardin for recognizing the fact that less traffic, better transit, an upgraded infrastructure, and a better quality of life make a big difference for retaining, attracting and growing jobs in Maryland. Reauthorizing federal highway and transit programs will support thousands of jobs right here in Maryland and help us continue to advance critical transportation projects like the Red and Purple Lines.

"To create jobs, a modern economy requires modern investments; investments that we can only make together; investments by all of us for the benefit of all of us. That's not a Democratic or a Republican idea; it's an economic and historic truth. It was true for our parents, it was true for our grandparents, and it is a truth that has built our State and has built our country."

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

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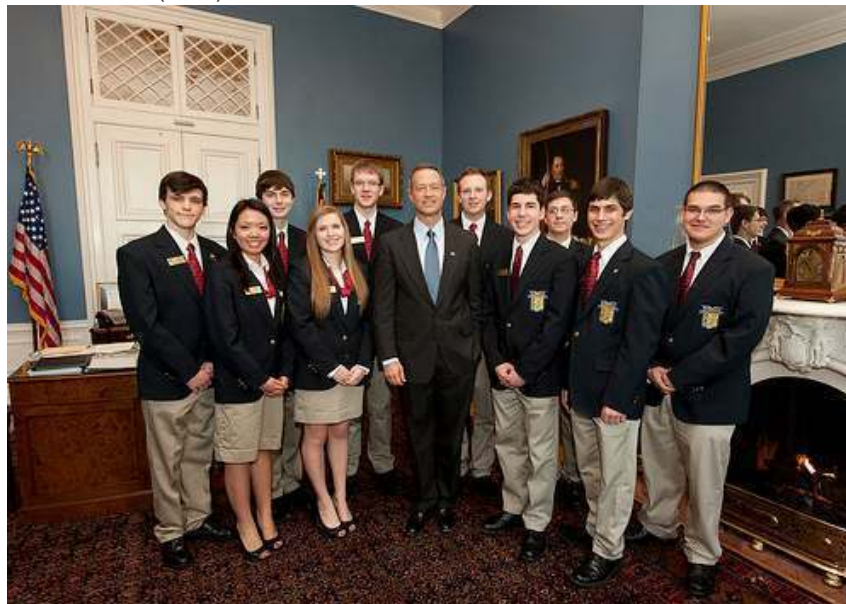
Governor Martin O'Malley Announces \$84 Million in Investment for Maryland's Innovation Economy

March 15th, 2012

Maryland first state in the nation to use online auction to raise funds for venture capital program

InvestMaryland will deploy first round of funds to seed early stage companies this summer

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley and Peter Greenleaf, chairman of the Maryland Venture Fund Authority, today announced that \$84 million has been raised for Maryland's Innovation Economy through InvestMaryland – an historic initiative created by the Governor and passed by the General Assembly last year to invest in the State's promising start-up and early stage companies. The \$84 million raised far exceeds a goal of \$70 million and was generated through an online auction of premium tax credits to insurance companies with operations in Maryland. While other states have sold tax credits to fund similar venture capital initiatives, Maryland is the first state to use an online auction to raise the capital for such a program. The inaugural round of investments will be made in innovative companies this summer through several private venture capital firms and the State's successful Maryland Venture Fund (MVF).



(Governor O'Malley pictured with members of the Future Business Leaders of America Maryland Chapter)

"Today, we are pleased to announce that Maryland has taken a significant step forward in generating capital for our businesses and creating jobs," said Governor O'Malley. "For the first time in our nation's history, a state has successfully held an online auction to raise funds for a venture capital program and as a result, Maryland will infuse \$84 million in venture capital into our Innovation Economy to create jobs. Our State is well-positioned to be a leader in the new economy as a global hub of innovation – a leader in science, security, health, discovery and information technology. That's why last year, together with business leaders from across the State and the General Assembly, we chose to invest in our diverse and highly-educated workforce and the skills and talents of our people for the jobs and opportunity of tomorrow."

InvestMaryland is the largest venture capital investment in history by the State. The program is being implemented through the Venture Fund Authority and the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED).

"I am thrilled with the auction's success in not only raising \$84 million for InvestMaryland in this difficult economic environment, but also by far exceeding our \$70 million goal. I'd like to thank our many partners in this effort – Grant Street Group, DBED staff, my colleagues on the Maryland Venture Fund Authority and the participating insurance companies for helping to make this auction a success," said Greenleaf, who is also President of Gaithersburg-based MedImmune. "I now look forward to putting this capital to work by making initial investments this summer to help build new businesses and create jobs in Maryland."

"Working together with our stakeholders and insurance companies, we were able to raise \$84 million and far exceed our goal to fuel innovation and entrepreneurship in Maryland," said Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) Secretary Christian S. Johansson. "This program brings maximum benefit for taxpayers, helps create the jobs and companies of tomorrow and builds an economic climate where the most promising ideas and innovations have a chance to mature."

Today's online auction attracted more than two dozen insurance companies with operations in Maryland, who bid on the tax credits with a floor of \$.70 on the dollar. The 11 companies awarded the credits are Agency Insurance, Chubb, GEICO, Hartford Insurance, IWIF, Med Mutual, Met Life, NY York Life, Selective and Traveler's. Insurance companies can claim tax credits beginning in 2015.

"GEICO is pleased to work with the State on the InvestMaryland program and participate in today's successful tax credit auction," said Mike Campbell, Chief Financial Officer of Maryland-based GEICO. "Our company is in full support of the positive impact that InvestMaryland will have on companies throughout Maryland in terms of job creation, stimulating private investment and moving our Innovation Economy forward."

Key tenets of InvestMaryland, Governor O'Malley's signature economic development proposal last year, have been implemented over the past nine months. In August, the Governor named the Venture Fund Authority, a nine-member panel that oversees the administration and operation of the program. Earlier this year, the Authority selected Grant Street Group to prepare for and run the tax credit auction and also recently selected Altius Associates, a London-based firm, to oversee the selection of three to four private venture firms to invest the InvestMaryland funds.

The private venture firms will be responsible for investing two-thirds of the funds, which will return 100 percent of the principal and 80 percent of the profits to the State's general fund. The remaining 33 percent will be invested by 17-year-old Maryland Venture Fund (MVF). Over its life, the MVF has invested \$25 million into hundreds of start-up and early stage technology and life sciences companies, generating a \$61 million return, 2,000 jobs and more than \$1 billion in private investment. The Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority (MSBDFA) will also receive a portion of funds for investment. Returns on the funds invested through the MVF will be reinvested in the program.

Among its benefits, InvestMaryland has the potential to create thousands of jobs in Innovation Economy sectors – life sciences and biotechnology, cyber security/IT and clean/green tech and attract billions of follow on capital. It mirrors many aspects of a federal program to accelerate high-growth entrepreneurship nationwide, The Startup America Partnership, which President Barack Obama launched year.

The program is one of a number of initiatives Governor O'Malley has introduced to spur innovation and entrepreneurship in Maryland. Earlier this year, the Governor announced a legislative proposal to create the Maryland Innovation Initiative, an historic partnership between the State and its research universities to advance cutting-edge research to the commercial marketplace.

Maryland has an outstanding infrastructure to support an Innovation Economy. The Milken Institute ranks Maryland #2 in the nation for technology and science assets. According to study results, while Maryland received high rankings in human capital investment, research and development inputs, technology and science workforce, and technology concentration and dynamism, it lagged behind other states in risk capital and entrepreneurial infrastructure, demonstrating the need for InvestMaryland and other programs. The Index provides measurements of the technology and science assets for states, ranking them on their ability to foster and sustain a technology sector, which research has shown is a crucial factor in determining a region's future economic success.

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Statement from Governor Martin O'Malley on National February Housing Report

March 22nd, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today released the following statement on the National Association of Realtors' housing report:



"The median sales price of homes in Maryland rose in February for the first time since 2007, an important milestone in Maryland's economic recovery. As our nation continues to recover, we are seeing signs of hope when it comes to homeownership. For the first time since 2007, sales of existing homes in January and February were at their highest level according to a report released by the National Association of Realtors, and in Maryland, home sales last month were 2.4 percent higher than a year ago.

"There is no more powerful place than a family's home and nothing more important for protecting that home than a job. Protecting homeownership is a challenge so large that we can only tackle it together. Citizens, private companies, and governments at every level have a role to play, and all of us share a stake in the outcome. In Maryland, we've focused on comprehensive reforms to help our neighbors keep their homes, and making homeownership attainable for more residents through initiatives like the [Maryland Mortgage Program](#). But we are not out of the woods, while we drove down foreclosure filings last year to their lowest level in four years, bank Notices of Intent to foreclose are on the rise.

"Progress is a choice. We are only as strong and competitive in this changing new economy as our ability and willingness to create jobs, help our families save their homes, and give more Americans the opportunity to realize the dream of homeownership."

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Joint Statement from Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown on the Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

March 23rd, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley and Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown today issued the following statement on the anniversary of the Affordable Care Act:

"Two years ago today, President Obama had the courage and the foresight to take an important step forward, and our nation is now poised to help millions of American families and small businesses and their employees gain access to high-quality, affordable health care coverage.

"In Maryland, we've extended coverage to over 300,000 of our fellow citizens, half of them children, because we've chosen together to invest in health care. We are moving forward with implementation of the Affordable Care Act to strengthen coverage, improve health, and support our competitiveness in the global economy. The day after the Affordable Care Act became law, we established the Health Care Reform Coordinating Council to oversee federal reform in Maryland, and today, our State is recognized as a national leader for our efforts to build Maryland's Health Benefit Exchange, and find new and innovative ways to deliver quality, affordable health care to more of our citizens.

"As we continue the conversation about the Affordable Care Act, from our nation's kitchen tables to the Supreme Court, we must ask ourselves what is the cost of inaction? When a small business is paying another 15, 17 or 20 percent annually every year for health insurance, how many fewer employees can they employ? What are the dollars that might have gone into expanding markets for their product or for their services? What are the opportunity costs for our families when a mom or dad has to choose between whether kids have a roof over their head, food on the table or health care?"

"Together, we must build that stronger America we all carry in our hearts by making better health care choices for our families and children."

This session, under Lt. Governor Brown's leadership, the Administration is working to pass the [Health Benefit Exchange Act of 2012](#) to support the successful operation of the Exchange and the [Maryland Health Improvement and Disparities Reduction Act of 2012](#) to reduce health care disparities in Maryland.

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Maryland Receives \$106 Million in Federal Funding to Provide More Care in Community Settings

March 23rd, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley and Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown today joined Maryland's Congressional Delegation and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in announcing that Maryland has been awarded more than \$106 million in federal grant funding to further efforts to provide long term care in community based settings rather than in institutions. The State Balancing Incentive Payment Program Grant, authorized under the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA), was designed to help states transform their long-term care systems. The competitive grant award increases the amount of federal matching funds received for each state dollar invested toward non-institutional long-term supports and services. Maryland is only the second state to win a grant award under the program.



"As a result of these additional grant funds, more of our seniors and people with disabilities will have the ability to stay in their homes, near their loved ones, rather than in institutions," said Governor O'Malley. "Thanks to President Obama and our Congressional Delegation, the Affordable Care Act has helped states reform their health care systems to reduce costs, protect choice, and help provide quality, affordable health care for more of our fellow citizens."

"The Affordable Care Act continues to provide Maryland with the tools and resources we need to improve health care throughout our State," said Lt. Governor Brown, Co-Chair of the Maryland Health Care Reform Coordinating Council. "These critical funds will boost our efforts to expand access to community-based care so more Marylanders can remain in their homes

and communities while enjoying a higher quality of life.”

“I believe that honor thy father and mother isn’t just a good commandment to live by, it’s good policy to govern by. This program maintains our commitment to seniors so that they can continue to get the care and support they need in their own homes and communities,” said Senator Mikulski, a senior member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee that passed the Affordable Care Act. “Thanks to what we accomplished with health care reform, quality and affordable care is becoming a reality for families across Maryland. I am proud to put funds in the federal checkbook so that Maryland’s commitment to community-based care is met dollar-for-dollar with federal support.”

“Keeping seniors as independent as possible for as long as possible is an important goal and this grant, which is made possible by the Affordable Care Act, will ensure that seniors receive long-term care services at home or in community-based settings,” said U.S. Senator Ben Cardin. “I am a big champion of expanding community-based health care services and this federal grant will help us make that possible.”

The grant award is an integral component of a broad state approach to expand community-based care. Other aspects of the state approach include new investments to transition individuals from nursing homes to the community, adoption of a better screening tool to identify people who need services, and formation of a new consumer council. All of this supports the state’s ongoing efforts to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act mandate to provide services to individuals in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.

“We have a responsibility to transform our long term care system into one that allows as many individuals as possible receive services in home and community-based settings, and this additional federal funding will help us as we continue our efforts to fulfill that important responsibility,” said Charles J. Milligan, Deputy Secretary for Health Care Financing at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

More information about Long Term Care in Maryland and the state’s efforts to reform the system to provide more services and supports in the community can be found at <http://mmcp.dhmdh.maryland.gov/longtermcare/SitePages/Home.aspx>. More information about the CMS State Balancing Incentive Payment can be found at <http://www.medicaid.gov/AffordableCareAct/Provisions/Community-Based-Long-Term-Services-and-Supports.html>.

Under the leadership of Governor O’Malley and Lt. Governor Brown, Maryland has implemented reforms that have expanded health coverage to more than 300,000 Marylanders, nearly half of them children. With the passage of this year’s budget, the number of Marylanders with health care coverage could reach 400,000.

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Governor O'Malley Commutes Sentences of Grant and Settles

March 29th, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley signed Executive Orders today granting conditional commutations to Mark Farley Grant and Tamara Settles. The Governor had previously published notice in the Daily Record that these commutation requests were under consideration. Mark Farley Grant's life term was commuted to a term of life with all but 45 years suspended. Tamara Settles' life term was commuted to a term of life with all but 40 years suspended.

The conditional commutations do not provide for immediate release of the grantees. Rather, the grantees will have mandatory release dates, and the Parole Commission will have the discretion to parole the grantees in advance of those mandatory release dates without the further approval of the Governor. The conditional commutations also require the Parole Commission and Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to formulate a transition plan to help the grantees successfully return to life outside of prison. The conditional commutations provide for supervision of the grantees after release by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and require the grantees to obey all laws and adhere to certain conditions of release, including the standard conditions of parole. If the grantee violates one of these conditions, the Parole Commission may revoke supervised release or, under some circumstances, recommend to the Governor that the conditional commutation should be revoked and the original life sentence re-imposed.

These are the first two commutation requests granted by Governor O'Malley. He has previously denied 49 commutation requests, 4 parole recommendations, and 4 medical parole recommendations from inmates serving life sentences. He has granted two medical paroles for inmates who were not serving life sentences.

<http://www.governor.maryland.gov/executiveorders/01.01.2012.07eo.pdf>

<http://www.governor.maryland.gov/executiveorders/01.01.2012.06eo.pdf>

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Statement from Governor Martin O'Malley on Preliminary February Jobs Report

March 30th, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today released the following statement on the U.S. Department of Labor's release of employment data for the month of February. February was the sixth straight month of job growth. Maryland's unemployment rate remains at 6.5 percent – the lowest unemployment rate in three years and nearly two full percentage points below the national rate of 8.3 percent. Since February of last year, Maryland employers added 47,000 jobs, 42,200 of which were in the private sector.

"Since February of last year, Maryland continued to create jobs, adding 47,000 jobs – 42,200 jobs in the private sector alone. Our unemployment rate of 6.5 percent remains nearly two percentage points below the national rate. Nearly 80 percent of jobs lost in Maryland during the recession have now been recovered – almost twice as fast as the U.S. economy as a whole.

"This steady progress in job creation is a positive sign that Maryland continues to move forward but the most important job we create is the next one. There is more work to be done and our focus remains on creating and saving jobs. Through programs like the Maryland Innovation Initiative that is now before the General Assembly and with existing programs like InvestMaryland, we will continue to create jobs and opportunity in Maryland. We recently held a successful first-in-the nation online auction to raise \$84 million in venture capital through InvestMaryland to help businesses grow and thrive, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce ranks Maryland as America's seventh best state for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

"Expanding opportunity to strengthen and grow our middle class is a choice. Because we have chosen to make the modern investments a modern economy requires to create jobs—investments in education, investments in innovation and investments in infrastructure, more Marylanders are working this year than last. Together, we can expand opportunity today, so that our children can compete and win the jobs and opportunity of tomorrow."

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Governor O'Malley Announces the "Maryland Pinterest Business Pitch Contest"

March 30th, 2012

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Today, in conjunction with the kickoff of Startup Maryland—a regional branch of Startup America—Governor Martin O'Malley announced a new business pitch contest designed to highlight Maryland entrepreneurs and small business owners. The contest will ask participants to pitch their businesses in 10 ten images using the new social media platform, Pinterest. Winners will be featured on Governor Martin O'Malley's Pinterest page (www.pinterest.com/martinomalley) and will also receive a prize courtesy of the Baltimore Angels.

"In Maryland, we have a rich history of fostering entrepreneurship. From our many incubators to our diverse centers and institutions of higher learning to our strategic tax credits, we encourage entrepreneurship at every level," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "Whether you've been in business for years or are just getting started, Maryland is the ideal place to do business and we encourage everyone to take advantage of this new contest."



The contest is a partnership with the University of Maryland College Park, the Future of Information Alliance, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development and the Baltimore Angels. Maryland entrepreneurs will be able to pitch their businesses using 10 images on a Pinterest board. Submissions will be showcased on Governor O'Malley's website. Boards and pins will be available for public comment. Following the public comment period, a panel of business experts will choose winners in two different categories: "Student Entrepreneurs" and "Boot Strappers." First place winners will receive a MacBook Air and runner ups will receive an iPad courtesy contest partner the Baltimore Angels.

"Angel investors love to be the first movers in hot new startup companies and emerging entrepreneurs," said Jason Hardebeck, a member of the Baltimore Angels and Executive Director of the Greater Baltimore Tech Council. "The Baltimore Angels are honored to help support the first ever business plan competition on the fastest growing social network in history. Maryland is a state of 'firsts' and we look forward to seeing the great ideas that the next generation of entrepreneurs bring to life on Pinterest."

Elana Fine, associate director of the Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship said, "We are excited to see Governor O'Malley use a new technology like Pinterest to solicit innovative business ideas. By using the newest social media trend, the Governor can better connect with

the next generation of entrepreneurs.”

Governor O'Malley recently announced that \$84 million has been raised for Maryland's Innovation Economy through InvestMaryland – an historic initiative created by the Governor and passed by the General Assembly last year to invest in the State's promising start-up and early stage companies. This year, together with several of our research universities, Governor O'Malley proposed the Maryland Innovation Initiative—an effort to get at least 40 new technologies out of labs and into the marketplace.

“We are pleased to support the Business Pitch Contest, which showcases the best and brightest ideas of our entrepreneur community,” said Department of Business and Economic Development Secretary Christian Johansson. “Contests like this are part of an overarching strategy in Maryland, which includes major programs like InvestMaryland and the Maryland Innovation Initiative, to build an economic climate where the most promising companies have a chance to mature.”

For contest guidelines and rules please visit this site: <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/pitch.asp>

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